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NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolica
Johns Island

159 have forty to fifty children to one teacher, and have to carry 'em from
87 scratch to seventh grade.
177 So we know that was a terrible condition, and that's the condition that
185 I want to try to eliminate. And that's my reason for not taking this bribe. I
[661] know that we wouldn't have gotten anywhere, not as long as I was willing
to take bribe and go along with the white folks. I had made some enemy
by not taking the bribe. I had made some of my people afraid of me because
I kept on fighting for the Negroes' right. But I didn't stop.

159 The white folks cut off this one big plantation that I used to haul to, as I
494 had three buses and two trucks. Sometimes I make sixty dollars, sixty to
177 eighty dollars a day, with three or four vehicle--twenty dollars for each one
[465] --to carry the people there. They cut that off, but I wouldn't stop. I keep on
driving and keep on fighting.

878 Since we have gotten the high school, now we have had quite a l
813 children graduated from the high school here on the island. Since then w
494 have been able to get this consolidated grammar school, and we have buses.

Mr. Esau Jenkins

WE DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE WHEN WE GO INTO COURT

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I'll tell you another way voting was able to help us. I could remember not too long ago, we didn't have a chance when we go into court. I remember a day I was riding with a man coming to Johns Island from Charleston, and a white person ran into the back of his truck. When we stop to find out what happen to the person, the law took side with the person who ran into the back of his truck, and he had to go to court.

We all thought that the judge would say, "Well, somebody ran into the back of the truck, certainly seem like that person is wrong." Unfortunately, he said that the colored man was wrong. He didn't have a chance in the court. But we decided to change that thing by getting people to see the importance of citizenship, registration and voting.

159 We got them to be interested in organizing what we call the Progressive
494 Club. I emphasize the word "progressive" which mean look upward, do
666 something better. And in this club we told them that if you're not registered
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Mrs. Septima Clark

AFTER I CAME BACK FROM HIGHLANDER, I DECIDED I SHOULD GET ESAU TO GO

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I knew Esau Jenkins when he was a boy of fourteen and came to my school to learn how to read. All his life Esau devoted himself to improving conditions on Johns Island.

Esau had a bus that he drove from Johns Island to Charleston and back, carrying tobacco workers and longshoremen to work. One morning one of the women on the bus made Esau a proposal. "I don't have much schooling, Esau," she said to him. "But I would like to be somebody. I'd like to hold up my head with other people; I'd like to be able to vote. Esau, if you'll help me a little when you have the time, I'll be glad to learn the laws and get qualified to vote. If I do, I promise you I'll register and I'll vote."

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